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USTR ANNOUNCES SPECIAL 301 ACTION ON TAIWAN

United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky today announced that Taiwan would be placed on the Special 301 "watch list" because of continuing concerns about enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPRs) in Taiwan.

In announcing this decision, Ambassador Barshefsky stated, "While Taiwan authorities have made some progress since April on IPR enforcement, I am concerned that overall these actions have not been effective in reducing the production and export of pirated and counterfeit goods, especially video games and components, CD-ROMs, and music and video CDs."

Taiwan remains one of the top four sources of infringing goods that U.S. Customs seizes on importation and is also a major source of such exports to Latin American markets, especially Paraguay.

Ambassador Barshefsky further stated, "I also am concerned by the persistent difficulties U.S. patent, trademark and copyright holders face defending their interests against infringements in Taiwan courts and administrative bodies. These obstacles must be eliminated. I look to Taiwan authorities to take definitive enforcement actions and make other necessary changes to its laws quickly to remedy these long-standing bilateral irritants. Should this occur, I certainly will consider removing Taiwan from the "watch list."

Background

On May 1, USTR announced the results of its the annual Special 301 review. With respect to Taiwan, the announcement indicated that Taiwan authorities had made recent assurances to address U.S. concerns and that USTR would closely monitor implementation of the specific measures over the following several months. Today's announcement is the result of that monitoring.